

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T MUSCAT 0348

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MU US UK
SUBJECT: MASIRAH ISLAND

REF: (A) SECTO 2064; (B) STATE 39003; (C) MUSCAT 0263

1. I WOULD WELCOME BRIEF STATUS REPORT ON OUR CONSIDERATION OF MASIRAH QUESTION AND, IF POSSIBLE, FORECAST AS TO WHEN INSTRUCTIONS MAY BE EXPECTED TO TAKE UP MATTER WITH OMANGOV.

2. WHILE OUR OWN ROUTINE BUSINESS WITH OMANI GOVERNMENT IS MOVING NORMALLY, IT MAY BE AN INDICATION OF CONTINUED UPPER-LEVEL OMANI IRRITATION AT OUR FAILURE TO APPROACH THEM ON THIS SUBJECT SO FAR THAT FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI FAILED TO GIVE ME AN APPOINTMENT AS REQUESTED DURING THE WEEK BETWEEN MY OWN RETURN FROM RIYADH AND HIS DEPARTURE MARCH 1 FOR CAIRO SUMMIT PREPARATIONS. THIS WAS THE CASE DESPITE MY HAVING TOLD ZAWAWI IN MID-FEBRUARY THAT I WOULD SEEK TO BRIEF HIM PERSONALLY SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER FEBRUARY 20 OF HIGHLIGHTS OF SECRETARYS PRESENTATION AT CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING. OF COURSE THIS COULD BE COINCIDENTAL, FOR ZAWAWI WEARING HIS FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL HATS HAS LATELY BEEN VERY BUSY WITH 1977 OMANI BUDGET DELIBERATIONS, AND THERE IS NO WAY I CAN KNOW FOR SURE. (MEANWHILE I WAS ABLE TO PASS RIYADH HIGHLIGHTS TO UNDER SECRETARY AL-ALAWI

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DURING CHANCE FEB 22 SOCIAL ENCOUNTER AND IN MEETING WITH HIM MARCH 5 CONCERNING BOYCOTT. AL-ALAWI DID NOT ASK ABOUT MASIRAH.)

3. SINCE MY RETURN FROM RIYADH I HAVE BEEN ASKED NO QUESTIONS BY OMANGOV ABOUT MASIRAH AND HAVE HAD NO NEED TO REITERATE, PURSUANT TO INSTRUCTIONS IN REF A, THAT USG STUDY OF THIS

QUESTION IS GOING FORWARD URGENTLY IN CONTEXT OF NEW
ADMINISTRATION'S REVIEW OF OVERALL POLICY. HOWEVER, I ANTI-
CIPATE SEEING ZAWAWI SOON AFTER HIS RETURN FROM CAIRO
SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 11. AT A MINIMUM IT WOULD BE USEFUL
TO BE ABLE THEN TO GIVE HIM A DETAILED LISTING OF LOGISTIC
REQUIREMENTS FOR OUR P-3 VISITS AT PRESENT LEVEL, THOUGH
AS REPORTED IN REF C IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE TO ASSURE
CONTINUITY IN FLIGHTS, THE SIXTH AND LAST OF WHICH FOR
PRESENT QUARTER DEPARTED MASIRAH MARCH 3.
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